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China's Diplomats in The United States: The Maturing of an Embassy

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A Research Paper

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China's Diplomats in the United States: The Maturing of an Embassy

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A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by [redacted] the
Office of Leadership Analysis. It was coordinated
with [redacted] the
Federal Bureau of Investigation. Comments and
queries are welcome and may be directed to the
Chief, China Branch, Office of Leadership Analysis,
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China's Diplomats in the United States: The Maturing of an Embassy

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Summary

*Information available
as of 5 September 1986
was used in this report.*

Since 1983 Beijing has transformed its Embassy in Washington from a fledgling establishment designed merely to monitor bilateral relations into an organization that pursues China's national interests with increasing effectiveness. The motivation for the changes was the signing of the Shanghai Communique on 1 August 1982. The communique downplayed the question of US arms sales to Taiwan, removing what had been the primary obstacle to broader political, commercial, technological, and military cooperation since the normalization of relations in 1979.

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Expanding relations between the United States and China necessitated major changes in the quality, number, and variety of Embassy personnel. First, the Embassy needed a competent ambassador, experienced in international affairs and Sino-US relations. It also required a more apolitical staff, able to provide the kind of objective analysis needed by Beijing to shape policy toward the United States and to deal with an increasing number of complex technical issues, such as nuclear fuel development, satellite technology, and textile quotas. To meet these needs, Beijing has since 1983:

- Twice replaced its Ambassador.
- Sent officials with greater experience in Sino-US affairs and with more technical training.
- Increased the Embassy staff by 47 percent (from 77 in 1983 to 113 in 1986).
- Appointed more non-Foreign Ministry officials (in 1983 only 21 percent were not diplomats; now 58 percent, or 68 of the 113, come from outside the Ministry).
- Reduced the Political Affairs Section's authority over specialized trade and S&T issues, giving more responsibility to the technical personnel in sections such as Commercial Affairs and Science and Technology Affairs.

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By putting more experienced, specialized diplomats in the four major sections—Political Affairs, Commercial Affairs, Science and Technology Affairs, and the Defense Attaché's Office—Beijing has greatly improved the Embassy's ability to report on US policy and to promote Chinese interests:

- Political officers now meet regularly with a wide variety of US officials in Washington and no longer base their analysis primarily on US media reports. They have developed a better understanding of US politics and are more effective lobbyists than were their predecessors.

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- The commercial section, despite internal coordination difficulties, now has a cadre of highly trained specialists who are better equipped to handle the nuances of trade negotiations, military procurement, and investment.
- To keep up with Beijing's growing demand for technology and military information, the Science and Technology Affairs Section and the Defense Attaché's Office have sharply increased the number and sophistication of their employees. These new officials have a better understanding of complex scientific and military subjects

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The Chinese Embassy in Washington.

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China's Diplomats in the United States: The Maturing of an Embassy

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The signing of the Shanghai Communique in August 1982 opened a new phase in Sino-US relations by removing obstacles to broader political, commercial, technological, and military cooperation. Beijing, however, entered this new phase with an ambassador—Chai Zemin—who was unable to effectively direct an embassy with growing responsibilities. US State Department officials say Chai was appointed more for his Chinese Communist Party (CCP) credentials than for his expertise in US affairs; moreover, he relied heavily on Foreign Ministry instructions, showed little energy or creativity in administration, and discouraged his staff from meeting with US counterparts.

were often ignorant of impending US decisions, according to US officials in Washington. At the Embassy Hu actively encouraged political officers to abandon their closeted workstyle, meet more regularly with their US counterparts, and learn in advance about changes in US policy.¹

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In October 1983 Ambassador Zhang personally arranged the transfer of Zhang Zai, a longtime personal and professional associate and then deputy director of the Foreign Ministry's American and Oceanian Affairs Department, to the Embassy's Political Affairs Section. US diplomats in Beijing at that time said that Zhang Zai, one of China's leading America watchers, could be counted on to provide a more informed analysis of US policy.

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Changing Ambassadors: In Search of Excellence

The April 1983 appointment of Ambassador Zhang Wenjin put a seasoned diplomat in charge of the Embassy. A US affairs expert, Zhang had participated in meetings leading to the 1972 visit to China of then President Richard Nixon. He was highly regarded by senior Chinese leaders and his Foreign Ministry peers for his administrative skills and his understanding of international affairs, as well as for the quality of his political analysis, according to US diplomats in Beijing.

In May 1985 Ambassador Zhang was replaced by Han Xu, widely acknowledged as the Foreign Ministry's highest ranking specialist on US affairs and one of the few Chinese Government officials to have dealt with US officials since the 1940s.² During World War II Han drove ambulances for US pilots shot down over China. After the Communists defeated the Nationalists in the civil war, he delivered China's request for recognition to the US Embassy in Beijing. In February 1972 he played a major role in the visit of President Nixon. The following year Han was assigned to Washington as Deputy Chief of the PRC Liaison Office (now Embassy). He remained there until 1979, when he returned to the Ministry as Vice Foreign Minister in charge of American and Oceanian affairs.

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Chinese Foreign Ministry officials have told US diplomats that Zhang was assigned to Washington to invigorate Embassy reporting, which until then had been drawn primarily from the US media. He made two personnel decisions that enabled the Embassy to develop a broader range of sources and upgrade the quality of its reporting. In June 1983 Zhang transferred then San Francisco Consul General Hu Dingyi to the Embassy as Deputy Chief of Mission. Hu's superior performance in dealing with West Coast politicians and businessmen made him an attractive choice as a role model for Embassy officials, who rarely left their offices to meet with Americans and

¹ Hu left Washington in 1985 to become Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

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² Zhang's reassignment was the result of age and not of Beijing's dissatisfaction with his performance.

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He was 71 when he returned to Beijing, six years past the mandatory retirement age and 11 years older than the newly assigned Han.

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*Vice President Walter
Mondale, National Security
Adviser Zbignew Brzezinski,
and Ambassador Chai Zemin
toast the January 1979
normalization of Sino-US
relations.*



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*President Ronald Reagan
receives newly appointed
Ambassador Han Xu.*



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Han and Zhang: Cut From the Same Cloth

Han Xu and Zhang Wenjin have followed similar career paths. They served simultaneously in the Foreign Ministry (1950-64, 1970-73, 1980-83) and abroad (1973-76). Both were purged during the early years of the Cultural Revolution (1967) but, like several leading Chinese diplomats at that time, were probably protected by then Premier Zhou Enlai. The only major difference in their careers came during 1973-76, when Han was deputy chief of the Liaison Office in Washington and Zhang was Ambassador to Canada (Beijing's premier America-watching post from the 1950s until the opening of the Liaison Office in 1972). Later, both men returned to Beijing to serve in turn as vice foreign minister in charge of US affairs (Zhang, 1978-83; Han, 1983-85), each immediately prior to appointment as Ambassador to the United States.



Han



Zhang

Event	Han Xu	Zhang Wenjin	
Age when appointed Ambassador to United States	60	67	
First dealings with Americans	1945 (World War II)	1945-49 (US Marshall Mission)	
Joined the Foreign Ministry	1949	1949	
First senior MFA position	1950-64 (director, Protocol Department)	1956-64 (director, Asian Affairs Department)	
First Overseas Post	1964-65 (second secretary, Moscow)	1966-67 (Ambassador to Pakistan)	
Purged in the Cultural Revolution	1967	1967	25X1
First post after the Cultural Revolution	1971-73 (director, Protocol Department)	1971-73 (assistant foreign minister)	
First North American assignment	1973-79 (deputy chief, PRCLO)	1973-76 (Ambassador to Canada)	
Vice Foreign Minister	1983-85	1978-83	
Ambassador to the United States	1985-present	1983-85	

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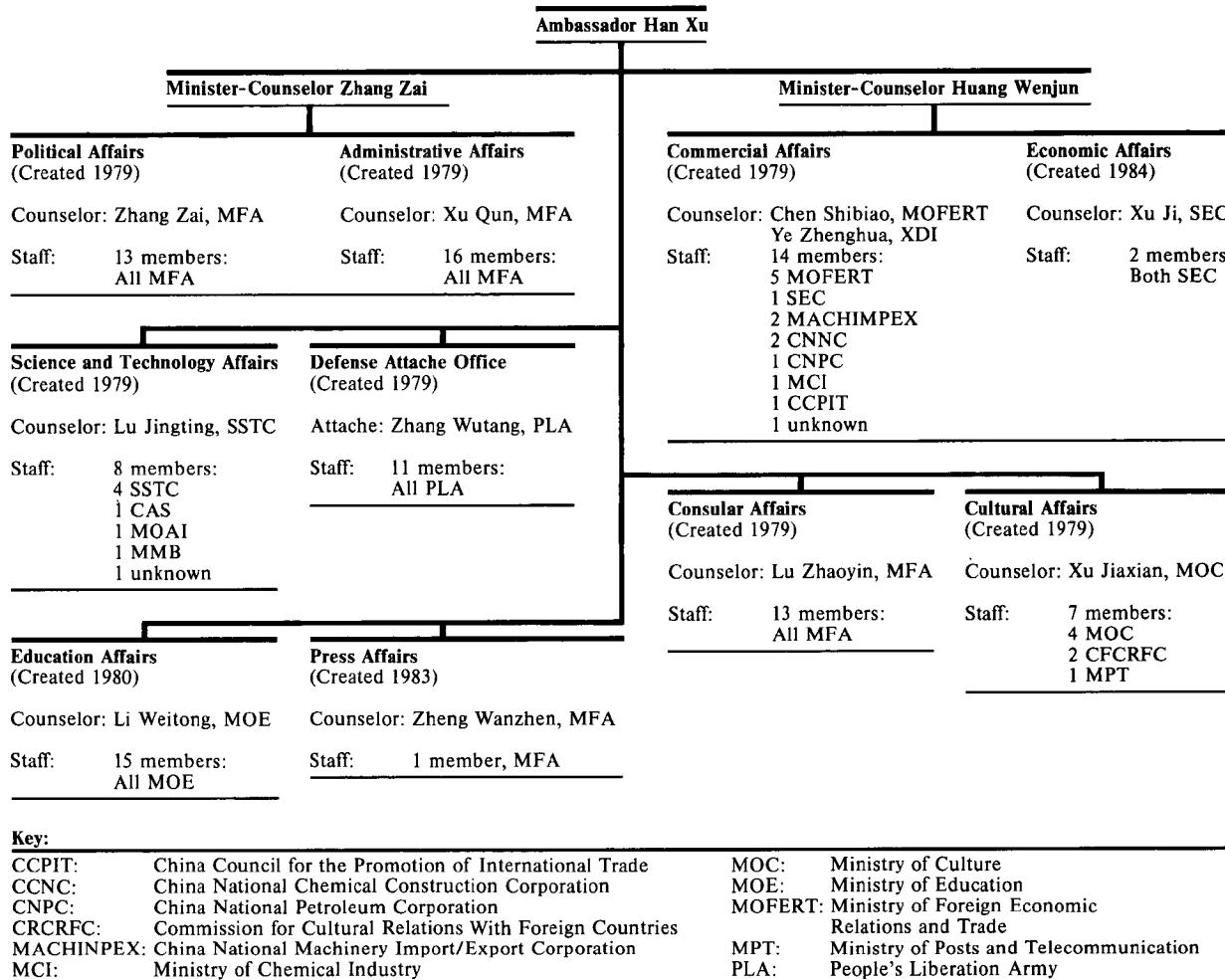
Since becoming Ambassador, Han has renewed relationships formed with US Government and industry officials when he served at the Liaison Office. During official and informal meetings with US officials he has spoken knowledgeably—usually without notes or other assistance—on topics ranging from purchasing land for diplomatic housing to chemical weapons and nuclear proliferation. Han, who in the past impressed Western diplomats as being stern and sometimes blunt, has surprised US officials in Washington with his congenial manner and a diplomatic style that is less pedantic than it was in Beijing. State Department

officials say that his February 1986 airing of Chinese objections to US arms sales to Taiwan was considerably less shrill and vehement than past performances. This probably reflects his diplomatic skill and adaptability as well as improvement in the broader US-Chinese relationship.

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US officials in Washington say that Han's encouragement has made their Chinese counterparts more willing to explore ideas that diverge from official CCP

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policy than were former Chinese political officers, who always adhered closely to the party line. State Department officials say that Political Counselor Wang Li, who frequently departs from official rhetoric to express what he labels his personal thoughts, is a case in point. During a State Department briefing for Chinese officials on the status of the 1985 US-Soviet nuclear disarmament talks in Geneva, for example, Wang departed from Beijing's public stance of noninvolvement by privately suggesting that a positive response to Soviet proposals would probably embarrass Moscow, which was counting on a negative reaction from the administration. [redacted]

The Counselors: US Affairs Experts

Ambassadors Zhang and Han have relied increasingly on the Embassy's two minister-counselors, 18 counselors, and defense attache to oversee daily operations. The counselors supervise the staff, prepare reports to Beijing, and serve as the Ambassador's point of reference for specific bilateral issues.³ (See chart.) During the past three years they have gained greater latitude in determining which issues are of interest to Beijing and how they should be reported, according to a variety of US officials. By virtue of their training and familiarity with Sino-US affairs, the counselors at the Embassy today are well qualified to manage their increased responsibilities. Indeed, on the basis of our conversations with US diplomats in Beijing and with US Government [redacted] officials in Washington, we believe many of them are the leading US affairs experts in their home organizations. Of the 20 current counselors, 16 led or participated in Sino-US negotiations before assignment to Washington, 13 had previously traveled to the United States, and 10 have been involved in Sino-US affairs for over a decade. We also know [redacted] that at least 12 have attended college, 17 speak some English, and another six speak a second or third foreign language. [redacted]

³ Most Embassy sections are headed by counselors; Political Affairs and Commercial Affairs, which have 10 and three counselors, respectively, are headed by Minister-Counselors. The Chinese diplomatic system is similar to the British Foreign Service in that not all political counselors serve in the Political Affairs Section. Counselor Xu Qun, for example, heads the Chancery and has only administrative duties. [redacted]



Minister-Counselor Zhang Zai plays with a tiger cub during a visit to the Columbus Zoo in Ohio. AP Laserphoto © [redacted]

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The Model Counselor

Minister-Counselor Zhang Zai exemplifies the new breed of counselor. He frequently ran the Embassy in Ambassador Zhang's absence and is now both the Embassy's second in command and head of the Political Affairs Section.⁴ He speaks fluent English and has been active in Sino-US relations since 1971, when then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger secretly visited China. Zhang has told US diplomats in Beijing that he returned to the Foreign Ministry in 1971 because discussions during Kissinger's visit clearly revealed a lack of officials with either an understanding of US affairs or a command of the English language (he had joined the Ministry in 1949 after attending Beijing University but had been criticized by the radical Red Guards at the height of the Cultural Revolution and sent to a farm). [redacted]

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Unlike his predecessors, Zhang holds regular discussions with a variety of US officials, including members of the National Security Council, the State Department, and Congress. People who have dealt [redacted]

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with him say that in formal meetings he is quietly assertive and prepared to discuss any number of current issues, but that his remarks generally do not contradict the Beijing line. They have observed, however, that during informal discussions Zhang will criticize his superiors' decisions if he believes they are wrong. [redacted]

We believe Zhang Zai has begun to staff the Political Affairs Section with seasoned America watchers who are also apparently his political allies. He was responsible for having Wang Li, a longtime friend, assigned to Washington as a political counselor in February 1985, according to US diplomats. Wang, who has dealt with Americans since the 1950s—when he was a translator for the Neutral Nations Armistice Committee in Panmunjom—had spent his entire Foreign Ministry career in the American and Oceanian Affairs Department. In 1980 he earned an M.A. degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies. [redacted]

The Technical Specialists

Beijing has strengthened the Embassy's ability to oversee activities in other areas by assigning as counselors non-Foreign Ministry officials who are familiar with Sino-US affairs, speak English, and are technically qualified. These new counselors have managed their duties more successfully than did their predecessors, who lacked such abilities, according to a variety of Washington officials. Counselors Chen Shibiao (commercial) and Lu Jingting (science and technology) are two examples. [redacted]

Commercial Counselor Chen Shibiao speaks English and is skilled in dealing with Americans. [redacted]

[redacted] Since coming to Washington in August 1985, Chen has participated in Sino-US talks on such issues as textiles, steel quotas, and COCOM restrictions. In contrast to his predecessor, who had handled Sino-European trade affairs before coming to Washington, Chen had previously focused almost exclusively on US affairs. As director of the US and Canada Division of the Third Department of

the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MOFERT) from 1983 until 1985, he negotiated the 1984 Sino-US Industrial and Technological Agreement, arranged for the visit of the US Presidential Trade Mission during the summer of 1984, and participated in the 1984 sessions of the Joint Economic Commission and of the Bilateral Investment Treaty Talks. As a member of Premier Zhao Ziyang's and President Li Xiannian's delegations to the United States during 1984 and 1985, respectively, Chen chaired the commerce-related discussions. [redacted]

A career State Science and Technology Commission (SSTC) scientist, Counselor Lu Jingting has been involved in Sino-US scientific cooperation for over a decade; his predecessor had only three years' experience in handling bilateral scientific issues before coming to the Embassy. Since arriving in Washington in October 1985, Lu has familiarized himself with key Washington organizations and their personnel who handle Sino-US scientific relations, according to officials of the Departments of Commerce and State. Before coming to Washington, he had served since 1984 as deputy director of the SSTC's Exchange Center, where he was responsible for monitoring exchange programs involving Chinese and foreign students, scientists, and businessmen. That same year he was appointed to the UN Advisory Board on Science and Technology Development. As deputy director of the SSTC's Foreign Affairs Bureau from 1974 until 1979, Lu met with numerous visiting US scientists, including a delegation from the American Aeronautical and Astronautical Society in 1978. [redacted]

The Staff: More Professional

Beijing's post-1983 effort to appoint well-qualified, well-educated officials extends below the counselor level. On the basis of conversations with US officials in Beijing and Washington, we believe the Embassy's 33 first secretaries are representative of recent staff assignments. [redacted]

[redacted] Like the counselors, the first secretaries are well acquainted with Sino-US affairs—55 percent (18) were involved

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in Sino-US affairs before being assigned to Washington, and 30 percent (10) have served previously in the United States. The current group of first secretaries is also well educated—45 percent (15) are known university graduates, 85 percent (28) speak some English, and 18 percent (6) have been trained in at least one additional foreign language. [redacted]

Staff quality appears to have been improved by the assignment of highly trained specialists from Chinese corporations, institutes, and commissions with a stake in specialized negotiations and reporting. Fifty-five percent (18 of the 33 current first secretaries) were sent by non-Foreign Ministry organizations, and 39 percent (13) have specialized technical skills in such areas as heavy machinery, antisubmarine weaponry, and space systems. These officials use their expertise to handle negotiations on issues of interest to their home organizations and, according to US officials in Washington, provide good reporting on those issues. One example is Commercial First Secretary Chang Liangcai of the China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation (MACHIMPEX), China's leading trader of industrial equipment. Appointed to the Embassy in September 1983, he oversees talks regarding trade in heavy machinery and reports on US actions affecting his corporation. He maintains close ties to officials of MACHIMPEX, according to Commerce Department officials. As a company official from 1979 to 1982, Chang helped attract and coordinate heavy machinery exports to China. Immediately before coming to Washington he served for a year as a deputy division chief in MOFERT's Loan Project Office, where he was exposed to the intricacies of arranging trade agreements. [redacted]

The staff also has a stake in fostering good Sino-US relations. Unlike their predecessors, who rose through the ranks during the Soviet alliance and the Korean and Vietnam wars, when Beijing advocated an anti-US foreign policy, this generation of professionals has established careers during a time of improving bilateral relations. Of the first secretaries, for example, 42 percent (14) began after the early 1970s. Subsequent years have seen the creation of numerous US-related jobs in Washington and Beijing and the expansion of a cadre of US affairs experts who see strong relations as important to their careers. Because of their person-

al interest, they seem more eager than their predecessors to work out differences with their US counterparts, according to US officials. This eagerness, however, probably stops far short of willingness to concede on important points. [redacted]

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Political First Secretary Lian Zhengbao, Cultural First Secretary Su Guang, and Science and Technology Second Secretary Jing Zhaoqian [redacted]

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[redacted] represent this younger group. Lian Zhengbao, now 45, was appointed first secretary in 1985. He meets regularly with his US counterparts and has discussed a variety of subjects, including China's objections to the US Government's use of the term "Republic of China" in its publications and Beijing's concern that Taiwan officials would obstruct inquiries into the 1985 murder of Chinese-American Henry Liu. Lian, who joined the Foreign Ministry in 1965, after graduating from the Ministry's Institute of International Relations, has been active in Sino-US relations since joining the US Affairs Division in 1970. He served as a notetaker during Henry Kissinger's secret visit to Beijing in 1971 and has told US diplomats that he helped draft the first communiqué—which China ultimately tabled—on normalization of relations. [redacted]

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Su Guang, 42, is the youngest first secretary in the Cultural Affairs Section. Appointed in March 1985, he had served with the Chinese People's Association for Friendship With Foreign Countries since the mid-1970s. He was the official interpreter for Chen Xitong, the mayor of Beijing, during Chen's 1984 US visit. A language major in college, Su was accepted by the Monterey Language Institute in California in 1979 but was unable to attend. [redacted]

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As the representative to the United States from the Ministry of Astronautics Industry, Jing Zhaoqian, 44, has been the principal contact for US Government and industry officials during negotiations to purchase a direct-broadcast satellite. Trained as an engineer—probably in missile or satellite tracking—he served with the Institute for Space System Engineering for

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Life at the Embassy

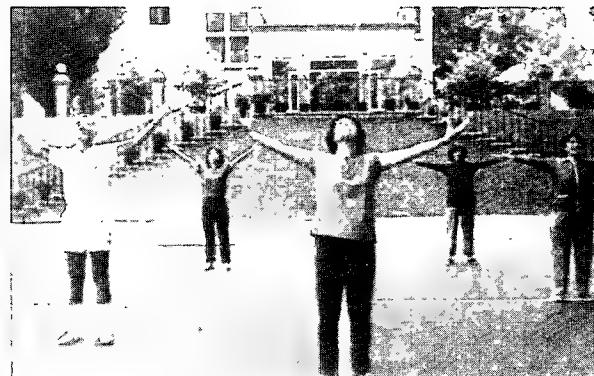
The assignment to Washington of Chinese diplomats who are younger and more familiar with US affairs has led to increased curiosity about American culture and society. With better English-language capabilities than their predecessors, Embassy personnel—particularly those at the second-secretary level and above—routinely attend cultural and academic events, serve as keynote speakers at international conferences and seminars, and no longer shun the media. The first staff members (other than the Embassy's regular chauffeurs) obtained their drivers' licenses in 1985 and can now operate the Embassy's fleet of tourbuses and minivans to take frequent trips to areas of historic or scenic interest. The staff has visited such sites as Colonial Williamsburg, Niagara Falls, and Disney World/EPCOT Center. [redacted]

Affairs Section offices and housing, but officials have not yet moved into these facilities.) In late 1984 the Washington Post reported that, within the Embassy, daily routines varied but most staff members began their day at dawn with morning exercises. After the news and breakfast, workers went to their offices from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Following dinner, most participated in evening exercises and then watched television or a Chinese or American movie. Sports are frequent diversions, and many members jog around the Embassy in the morning and swim and play tennis at the Ambassador's residence in the afternoon. [redacted]

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Ambassador Zhang (in white tennis togs) and staff doing morning exercises outside the Embassy. [redacted]

Washington Post Sunday Magazine ©

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Embassy officials enjoy a swim in the Ambassador's pool. [redacted]

Washington Post Sunday Magazine ©

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The Embassy is a close-knit group of families who live, work, and play together. All members—except the Ambassador and a few of his personal staff—live at the Embassy. (According to the State Department, an agreement concluded in 1984 allowed the Chinese to purchase two separate properties for Cultural

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several years before joining the Chinese Academy of Space Technology in 1979. He visited the United States twice with space delegations before being assigned to the Science and Technology Section at the Embassy in Washington in 1983. [redacted]

[redacted] his technical knowledge, relaxed style, and command of English. [redacted]

Science and Technology Counselor Lu Jingting's surprise at learning of the well-publicized October 1985 resignation of Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler epitomizes this problem. State Department officials say that, despite the section's responsibility for arranging the Secretary's visit to Beijing later that year, Lu's staff failed to inform him, leaving him unaware of the resignation several weeks after it occurred. [redacted]

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The Sections: Meeting New Needs

The assignment of trained specialists familiar with such complex issues as textile quotas, technology transfer, and military weapons procurement has enabled the Embassy's four major sections—Political Affairs, Commercial Affairs, Science and Technology Affairs, and the Defense Attaché's Office—to manage their specialized tasks independently. Because of the sections' new autonomy, the Political Affairs Section is no longer able to dominate nonpolitical areas, as it did before 1983. US commercial officials once had to discuss all significant issues with Embassy political officers because commercial or S&T and technology personnel were incapable of holding meaningful talks. US military and government officials in Washington say that, since the 1983 appointment of Defense Attaché Zhang Wutang, Chinese military attaches have asserted greater control over military issues, discussing them not only with US Department of Defense officers but also with officials in the State Department and the National Security Council. [redacted]

Although the assignment of better trained, more specialized personnel has made non-Foreign Ministry sections more independent, it has also created coordination and communications problems that did not exist when the political section oversaw all major issues. Commercial Counselor Chen and Science and Technology Counselor Lu, in particular, are often bypassed by subordinates who come from different organizations and report directly to their superiors in Beijing, according to their US counterparts. US officials in Washington say Embassy officers in the Commercial and Science and Technology Sections frequently fail—often deliberately—to inform their superiors of specific projects, leading to delays in routine business and ignorance of current events.

Political Affairs: The Vanguard of Improvement

Since 1983 the Political Affairs Section has improved its ability to deal with US officials; we believe that its reporting has also improved markedly. The close association of the Foreign Ministry's best America watchers, including Ambassadors Zhang and Han, as well as other senior US Affairs Division personnel assigned to Washington, has enabled the section to understand and work with Americans more successfully than it did under Ambassador Chai. Current political officers, in contrast to their predecessors, make more of an effort to bounce ideas off their US counterparts and are not as inclined to base their analysis strictly on US media reports. Working breakfasts and luncheons are no longer a rarity—the 1985 nuclear cooperation agreement was formulated entirely through a series of working lunches with State Department officials in Washington, for example—and demarches are delivered on a diplomatic level without the nationalistic rhetoric that accompanied them in the past. [redacted]

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New and Improved Reporting. Since the appointment of Ambassador Zhang, the Embassy has sought to improve its political analysis and boost the influence of its reporting in Beijing. Reporting from Washington—like that from other missions—has traditionally carried little weight with foreign policy makers [redacted] The [redacted]

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**Number of Washington Lobbying Agents
Employed by Four Asian Nations, 1980-85**

Country	1980	1982	1985
CHINA	10	14	24
JAPAN	82	87	91
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	32	35	45
TAIWAN	29	24	37

Source: US Department of Justice, Foreign Agents Registration Unit,
January 1980-June 1986

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Key Washington Lobbying Agents Used by China

Company	Area of Responsibility
Akin, Gump, (Strauss), Hauer and Feld	Trade, Foreign Policy Advice
Anderson & Pendleton, Chartered Attorneys	Civil Aviation
Daniels, Houlihan, and Palmeter	Textile Negotiations
Garvey, Schubert, Adams, and Barer	Legal Representation Before the US Maritime Commission
Haight, Gardner, Poor, & Havens	Civil Aviation
International Business and Economic Research Corporation	Textile Statistics and Negotiations
Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue	Diplomatic Public Relations
Milbank and Tweed	Trade Legislation
Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander	Textile Negotiations
Pierson, Semmes, and Finley	Trade Legislation
Surrey & Morse	Legal Services, Congressional Lobbying on Foreign Investment and Family Planning Legislation
Whitman and Ransom	Asian Development Bank Membership

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Foreign Ministry's assignment to the Political Affairs Section of knowledgeable officers such as Zhang Zai and Wang Li was in large part a response to complaints from senior leaders about the quality of Embassy analysis. The assignment of better officers—and their increased interaction with US officials—has resulted in more informed, complete, and unbiased interpretations of US policies and views. For example, State Department officials say that, during the 1985 negotiations to include China on the list of countries eligible to receive US foreign aid, a Chinese political officer read to his US counterpart the text of a telegram before it was sent to Beijing in order to ensure that US views were accurately represented. The message, containing the Embassy's analysis of the issue, used exact quotes from and the names of US officials to support its comments. US diplomats in

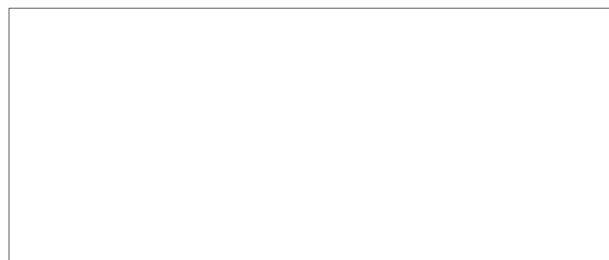
Beijing report that ensuing discussions with their Foreign Ministry counterparts were more successful than they had anticipated.

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attending Congressional hearings [redacted]

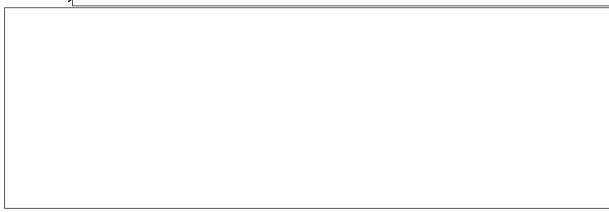
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[redacted] the Embassy's lobbying during the 1985 Congressional debate over providing AID family planning assistance funds to China illustrated its maturing finesse. During this debate, several US Congressmen raised the issue of whether China, which advocates forced abortions, should receive US assistance. [redacted] the Chinese were unable to curtail Congressional discussion of family planning and medical practices, [redacted]

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We believe Ambassadors Han and Zhang have used their influence to get the Embassy's analysis to top leaders. Unlike Chai, both were chosen by Deng Xiaoping, and Han has stated publicly that he reports directly to Deng. Neither Han nor Zhang hesitated to return to Beijing to participate in foreign policy discussions affecting Sino-US relations, according to US diplomats in Beijing. This personal involvement is important because Chinese foreign policy making remains highly centralized; we know [redacted] that Deng, with the assistance of Premier Zhao Ziyang and CCP Secretary Hu Yaobang, is the ultimate arbiter in major foreign policy decisions. [redacted]

The New Lobbyists on Capitol Hill. The Political Affairs Section's highly successful efforts to interact with officials in the executive branch of the US Government have not yet been matched on Capitol Hill. In the past, Embassy political officers did not understand how Congress operated, tended to remain "behind the curve" on issues of concern to them, and frequently missed opportunities to expand their influence, [redacted]



Although Beijing's lobbying effort on the Hill is still in its infancy, during the last three years the section has improved its technique and added new programs. Zhang Zai and Wang Li—the most active lobbyists—have a better understanding of how US Government policy is made and are more tolerant of political posturing than were their predecessors [redacted]

[redacted] Zhang and Wang work Capitol Hill regularly, [redacted]

the predictable approach would have been to declare it an issue of national sovereignty, harangue the United States for bullying, and angrily issue political demarches and public pronouncements condemning Congress. In this instance, however, the Chinese pursued their interests in a low-key manner, sending formal letters and holding constructive one-on-one talks with key US Congressmen and Senators. [redacted]

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In addition to improving its style, the Embassy has during the last three years added to its lobbying resources:

- It has increased its use of established US lobbying groups. In 1985 China ranked fourth among Asian nations in the number of lobbying firms retained; it employed 24 such firms.
- It created a formal organization in 1984 to coordinate trips to China for Congressmen during the January and August recesses. US officials say the Chinese organization, modeled after Taiwan's long-standing program, has become more popular and effective than Taipei's efforts because of a willingness to grant access to senior leaders.

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Ambassador Han has told State Department officials that because of the number and complexity of issues affecting China, two new officers will expand the Embassy's network for knowing how, when, and why Congress will act. [redacted]

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Commercial Affairs: Slowly Making Needed Changes

Appointments to the Commercial Affairs Section since 1983 have infused the group with experienced, well-educated, and young officers who are more active in meeting their US counterparts than were their predecessors.

Of the 11 first and second secretaries, 10 have a commercial background; 16 of the section's 20 members speak some English. All of the members below the first-secretary level are in their thirties or forties.

Unlike their counterparts in the Political Affairs Section, however, the commercial officers lack initiative and teamwork, according to US Commerce Department officers, who add that the commercial officers tend to view their jobs as routine desk work and are frequently ignorant of recent developments. Cooperation is further hampered because members come from two ministries, four corporations, and one commission and because each organization tasks its own employees and requires them to report directly to it.⁶

Diminishing Party Influence

Beijing's emphasis on diplomatic professionalism has caused Chinese Communist Party (CCP) influence and activities at the Embassy to ebb. US officials who meet with Embassy officers say that, under Ambassadors Han and Zhang, diplomats have been able to miss party meetings to attend business functions—unlike their predecessors, who were required to attend all political study sessions. Embassy personnel who miss these meetings are usually briefed by the party secretary at a later date.

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Like all Chinese institutions, the Embassy maintains an internal CCP committee, created and staffed by the party to relay directives and to monitor the loyalty of its members.

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Within the past year Beijing has moved to strengthen the section by posting three new counselors to oversee key functions:

- In August 1985 Chen Shibiao was assigned to handle trade negotiations.
- In September 1985 Ye Zhenhua was assigned to oversee military procurement, an area of growing importance and one with which Commercial Counselor Chen was unfamiliar.
- In June 1986 Xu Ji was assigned as economic counselor to attract US investors.

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⁶ Within the ranks of the counselors and first and second secretaries, the section includes five members from MOFERT; three from the SEC; two each from MACHIMPEX and the China National Chemical Construction Corporation; and at least one each from the Xinshidai (New Era) Company, the China National Petroleum Corporation, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and the Ministry of Chemical Industry.

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The new counselors are all highly qualified [redacted] 25X1

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 Huang Wenjun, who arrived in June 1986—has the talent, experience, and energy needed to invigorate the section. [redacted] he has a reputation as a technocrat who is well versed in bilateral commercial issues, pleasant to deal with at the negotiating table, and well connected in commercial organizations throughout the United States, according to former US diplomatic and commercial officials. Active in Sino-US commercial relations since the early 1970s, Huang has served at the UN in New York (1972-73) and with the PRC Liaison Office in Washington (1973-76). While in Washington he frequently acted as head of the commercial section, impressing [redacted] with his efficiency and ability to remain calm during heated discussions [redacted] 25X1 25X1
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Newly assigned Economic Counselor Xu Ji arrived in Washington with a mandate to boost US investment in China, an area which received little attention under his predecessor.⁷ The former director of the Foreign Affairs Bureau of the State Economic Commission and one of China's leading experts on international finance, Xu has dealt with US financial and banking officials since 1979 and appears well qualified for his current post. [redacted] he is knowledgeable on international economic and financial issues and has supported closer ties with the United States in these areas. [redacted] he favors forcing Chinese companies and enterprises to obtain backing from foreign investors because these creditors would want a return on their investment and therefore would ensure that their Chinese partners ran their operations efficiently and profitably. [redacted] 25X1

⁷ In December 1984 Beijing created an economic counselor position at the Embassy to get economic analysis from a post that was not reporting and to boost the level of US investment in China. Liu Guangpu, an experienced SEC official who filled the post when it was created, encouraged his staff to develop contacts with several US economic think tanks; the section, however, continued to base its analysis on US media reports. For example, US diplomats in Beijing say that senior Chinese financial officials were unprepared for the 1986 reintroduction of protectionist legislation, having believed Embassy economic reporting—which was based on US press reports—that the US protectionist tide was ebbing. [redacted]

Science and Technology Affairs:

Active Technology Collectors

Despite a 1983 US decision to relax export restrictions, Beijing's efforts to obtain US technology have increased, [redacted] 25X1 25X1

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- Since 1983 the section has increased its efforts to identify and recruit Overseas Chinese scientists willing to teach or lecture in China, according to the FBI. In 1984 the section helped develop a program that regularly sends such scientists to China, where their expenses are paid by the individual ministries, institutes, and universities that benefit from their expertise. [redacted]

The section's ability to obtain the information Beijing wants has been bolstered by the assignment of nine highly specialized scientists and engineers—including, for example, a satellite engineer from the Ministry of Astronautics Industry, a physicist from the State Science and Technology Commission (SSTC), and a health sciences specialist from the Chinese Academy of Sciences—to replace the seven generalists who made up the staff before 1983. The new personnel have pursued their contacts more vigorously than did their predecessors, according to the FBI, and because of their advanced scientific training can elicit more useful information in technical dialogues. [redacted]

As the Embassy's technical experts, they also help manage technology-related programs that cross bureaucratic lines. For example, US Government and military officers say that science and technology officers work closely with their counterparts in the Defense Attaché's Office and Commercial Affairs Section to oversee issues relating to technology transfer or COCOM-controlled equipment. Other US officials note that the staff cooperates with members of the Education Affairs Section to monitor the activities of PRC students in the United States and guide their studies at US universities. Science and technology officers also manage the Embassy's annual purchase—[redacted]—of an estimated 80,000 US Government publications, including those issued by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Defense Technical Center, the National Technical Information Service, and the Department of Energy. [redacted]

Defense Attaché's Office:
Growing Awareness of International Affairs

The 12-member Defense Attaché's Office gives Beijing a highly effective means of monitoring worldwide military affairs, say Department of Defense officials.

A Growing Covert Collection Effort

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The FBI reports that the largest number of officials engaged in covert operations now serves in the Science and Technology Affairs Section and the Defense Attaché's Office, although a significant number of consular and cultural officials are engaged in covert recruitment of Chinese-Americans and Taiwanese living in Washington. [redacted]

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Rivaling the Embassy's political officers in their willingness to meet with their US counterparts, Chinese military officers frequently visit the Pentagon to discuss issues ranging from current events in Afghanistan, Central America, and the Middle East to the evolving Sino-US military relationship. The attaches attend briefings, seminars, and social functions to collect and report information on US military strategy and equipment, as well as US information on Soviet and Taiwanese military forces. [redacted]

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We believe the DAO's effectiveness can be attributed to Defense Attaché Zhang Wutang's vigor and intelligence and the unit's cohesiveness and relative freedom of action. Zhang has been highly successful in setting an example for his staff in interaction with Americans, according to US military officers. Assigned in August 1983, he has impressed US Government and military officials with his knowledge of world affairs, weapons technology, and military strategy and history. They say that he is open and willing to express opinions on most subjects—although he generally does not deviate from the official line—and that he stands in sharp contrast to his predecessor, Xu Yimin,

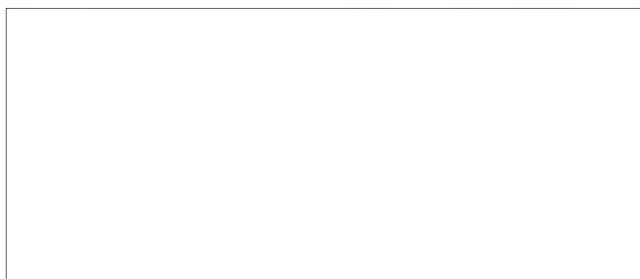
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The DAO functions as a well-disciplined military unit with a single chain of command. Unlike the Commercial and Science and Technology Sections, with their variegated membership, the DAO operates under orders from PLA headquarters in Beijing and is thus highly responsive to its consumers' needs.⁹

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Although Zhang keeps Ambassador Han abreast of the office's activities, US military officers say it is often only as a matter of record. They add, however, that Zhang's ability to interact with his colleagues has kept the Embassy's civilian officials from extensive infighting over the DAO's independence.

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